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PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Afghanistan, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe: draft resolution

The girl child

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 50/42 of 8 December 1995, 50/154 of 21 December 1995, 50/203 of 22 December 1995 and 51/76 of 12 December 1996,

Recalling also, the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women[1] the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social

[1] Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

Development,[2] held at Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[3] held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights,[4] held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s of the World Summit for Children,[5] held in New York on 29 and 30 September 1990, the World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs[6] adopted at the World Conference on Education for All, held at Jomtien, Thailand, from 5 to 9 March 1990, and the Declaration and Agenda for Action[7] of the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held at Stockholm from 27 to 31 August 1996,

Deeply concerned that girls, in particular adolescent girls, continue to be silent and invisible victims of violence, abuse and exploitation and that some legal systems do not address adequately the vulnerability of girls in the administration of justice,

Recalling that in 1998 the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be observed and the mid-term review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development will be carried out and that the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session will review the implementation of the sections of the Platform for Action on the girl child and the human rights of women,

Welcomes the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, in accordance with section II of Assembly resolution 51/77 of 12 December 1996,

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[2] Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[3] Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[4] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[5] See A/45/625, annex.

[6] Final Report of the World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs, Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990, Inter-Agency Commission (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank) for the World Conference on Education for All, New York, 1990, appendices I and II.

[7] A/51/385, annex.

Stressing that discrimination of the girl child and neglect might initiate a lifelong downward spiral of deprivation and exclusion from the social mainstream,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access for girls to education, nutrition, physical and mental health care and to girls enjoying fewer rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys and often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices such as incest, early marriage, female infanticide, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

Deeply concerned also that in situations of poverty, war and armed conflict, girl children are among the victims most affected and thus their potential for full development is limited,

Concerned that the girl child has become a victim of the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome and sexually transmitted diseases, which affects the quality of her life and leaves her open to further discrimination,

Reaffirming the equal rights of women and men as enshrined, inter alia, in the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[8] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[9]

1. Stresses the need for full and urgent implementation of the rights of the girl child as guaranteed to her under all human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

2. Urges all States to take all necessary measures and to institute legal reforms to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to take effective action against violations of those rights and freedoms;

3. Also urges all States to enact and enforce legislation protecting girls from all forms of violence, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, female genital mutilation, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution and child pornography, and to develop age-appropriate safe and confidential programmes and medical, social and psychological support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence;

4. Calls upon all States and international and non-governmental organizations, individually and collectively:

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[8] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[9] Resolution 44/25, annex.

(a) To set goals and to develop and implement gender-sensitive strategies to address the rights and needs of children, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to take into account the rights and particular needs of the girl child, especially in education, health and nutrition, and to eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against the girl child;

(b) To take measures to ensure the non-discrimination and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of the girl child with disabilities;

(c) To generate social support for the enforcement of laws on the minimum legal age for marriage, in particular by providing educational opportunities for girls;

(d) To give attention to the rights and needs of adolescent girls, which call for special action for their protection from sexual and economic exploitation and abuse, harmful traditional and cultural practices, teenage pregnancy and vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome and for the development of life skills and self-esteem, reaffirming that the advancement and empowerment of women throughout the life cycle must begin with the girl child at all ages;

(e) To take measures to increase awareness of the potential of the girl child and to promote gender-sensitive socialization of boys and girls from early childhood, aimed at achieving gender equality, development and peace within the family and the community;

(f) To ensure the equal participation of girls and young women on the basis of non-discrimination and as partners with boys and young men in social, economic and political life and in the development of strategies and the implementation of action aimed at achieving gender equality, development and peace;

(g) To strengthen and reorient health education and health services, in particular primary health-care programmes, including sexual and reproductive health, and to design quality health programmes that meet the physical and mental needs of girls and attend to the needs of young expectant and nursing mothers;

5. Urges States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

6. Also urges States to eliminate all barriers so as to enable girls, without exception, to develop their full potential and skills through equal access to education and training;

7. Encourages States to consider ways and means to ensure the continuing education of married women, pregnant women and young mothers;

8. Urges States to take special measures for the protection of children, in particular to protect girls from rape and other forms of sexual abuse and gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict, paying special attention to refugee and displaced girls, in line with the recommendations of the expert appointed by the Secretary-General to study the impact of armed conflict on children;

9. Urges States parties to fulfil the obligations they have undertaken under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to protect women and girls from all forms of violence, including domestic violence, sexual trafficking and child prostitution;

10. Urges States to implement measures to protect women and girls from all forms of violence, in line with the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences;

11. Requests all States to implement, on an urgent basis, measures to protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation, including measures in line with those outlined in the Declaration and Agenda for Action of the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children;

12. Calls upon Governments, civil society, including the media, and non-governmental organizations to promote human rights education and the full respect for and enjoyment of the human rights of the girl child, inter alia, through the translation, production and dissemination of age-appropriate information materials on these rights to all sectors of society, and particularly to children;

13. Calls upon Governments to encourage efforts by civil society, non-governmental organizations including women's organizations, to establish community-based groups or local committees which could assist with the safety and welfare of children;

14. Request the Secretary-General, as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, to ensure that all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the World Health Organization, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, take into account the rights and the particular needs of the girl child, especially in education, health and nutrition, and eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against the girl child in the implementation of the outcome of all recent global conferences, in particular the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, and of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 1996-2001;[10]

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[10] E/1993/43, annex.

15. Calls upon the Commission on Human Rights, while considering, in accordance with the agreed conclusions 1996/1 of the Economic and Social Council,[11] its input to the Commission on the Status of Women on ensuring women's equal enjoyment of their human rights, in particular those relating to economic resources, to pay particular attention to all the human rights of the girl child;

16. Encourages the strengthening of cooperation and coordination among all human rights treaty bodies, special rapporteurs, special procedures and other human rights mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and requests that they regularly and systematically take a gender perspective into account in the implementation of their mandates, including information and qualitative analysis in their reports on violations of the human rights of women and the girl child;

17. Calls upon States and international and non-governmental organizations to mobilize all necessary resources, support and efforts to realize the goals, strategic objectives and actions set out in the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women;

18. Calls upon all States, all relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to implement commitments to goals and actions relating to the girl child and to report on initiatives and progress to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session, pursuant to the decision of the Commission to review the progress made in the implementation of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women relating to the girl child in 1998.

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[11] See A/51/3 (Part I), chap. III, sect. A; see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 3.